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ABSTRACT

Because the fast-growing Hispanic population of the United States has little political and economic power (a problem which has been linked to a lack of media attention to this group), a study sought to determine to what extent Miami's Spanish-language newspapers provided Hispanic angles to the 1988 presidential primary. Miami's two Spanish-language daily newspapers, "El Neuvo Herald" and "Diario Las Americas," were analyzed. Stories--excluding advertising content, editorials and letters to the editor--that dealt with the presidential primaries were coded two ways: (1) for candidate(s), if any; and (2) according to whether or not the story made any reference to Hispanic concerns. Finally, stories were coded by topic, i.e., the election itself, candidate/party platforms, and campaign activities. The results from the two Miami newspapers were compared to the presidential primary coverage of "La Opinion" of Los Angeles. Results indicated that the papers cannot be justifiably accused of overlooking Hispanic concerns; there seemed to be a slight tendency for stories dealing generally with the candidate or party platform and those dealing with general political news to address Hispanic concerns; and some evidence suggests that the coverage followed the partisan policies of the newspapers. (Two tables of data are included, and 78 references are attached.) (NH)

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MIAMI'S SPANISH-LANGUAGE NEWSPAPERS REPORT THE 1988 PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY

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Newspapers are becoming increasingly aware of Hispanics, the nation's fastest growing minority (Anon., 1988a; Garrison, 1987; Exter, 1987). Although Hispanics were once overlooked by the media, they are now becoming the beneficiaries of a trend toward market segmentation (Allen & Clarke, 1980; Garrison, 1986; Guernica & Kasperuk, 1982; Hoyer & Deshpande, 1982; O'Guinn & Faber, 1984; O'Guinn, Faber, & Meyer, 1985; Roslow & Roslow, 1980). Many metropolitan daily newspapers with large Hispanic populations have sought to serve their Hispanic readers by providing Hispanic angles to their news stories or providing Spanish-language supplements (Gutierrez, 1987; Rosensteil, 1987; Shoemaker, Reese, & Danielson, 1985). This study examined newspaper coverage of the 1988 presidential primaries in Miami's Spanish-language newspapers to see whether these newspapers provide their readers with Hispanic angles of the 1988 presidential campaign.

The research on newspaper coverage of Hispanics and issues of interest to Hispanics has been invaluable (Fishman & Casino, 1969; Greenberg & Baptista-Fernandez, 1980; Greenberg, Burgoon, Burgoon & Korzenny, 1983; Greenberg, Heeter, Burgoon, Burgoon, & Korzenny, 1983; Korzenny, Neundorf, Burgoon, Burgoon, & Greenberg, 1983; Subervi-Velez, 1986). However, research on Spanish-language newspaper coverage of Hispanics and issues of concern to Hispanics has been surprisingly sparse (Subervi-Velez, 1986). Spanish-language newspapers, which claim to provide their readers with news of interest to Hispanics, are among the largest and most established of all foreign-language newspapers in the United States (Subervi-Velez, in print, 1986).

For over 50 years, media scholars have analyzed news coverage during political campaigns to determine where the candidates and media direct their political priorities (Adams, 1984; Clarke & Evans, 1983; Everts & Stempel, 1974; Graber, 1969, 1971; 1987; McCombs & Shaw, 1972; Martindale, 1984; Meadow, 1980; O'Keefe & Atwood, 1981; Ostroff, 1980; Patterson, 1980; Shaw & McCombs, 1977; Stempel, 1965; Stovall, 1988; Weaver, Graber, McCombs, & Eyal, 1981). In particular, research on the agenda-setting function of the news media has examined what issues the news media select and emphasize and which they overlook (Atwater, Salwen & Anderson, 1985; McCombs & Shaw, 1972; Salwen, 1988; Weaver, Graber, McCombs, & Eyal, 1981). By selecting some issues while overlooking others, it is argued, the news media function to determine what issues the public will regard as important and legitimate, and, eventually, which issues will be addressed by policy makers (Cobb & Elder, 1983; Lang & Lang, 1981). Gandy (1983) has offered a revisionist interpretation of agenda-setting which asserts that those with economic and political power influence and set the media agenda. In other words, the media are not independent actors or impartial gatekeepers in the news selection process. Rather, they are the agents of power, reflecting the views and concerns of those with financial and political power in society (also see Altschull, 1984).

Despite the phenomenal population growth of Hispanics, they continue to hold disproportionately little political and economic power in America. Power to influence the media agenda, as Gandy and some others see it, is not a function of political participation, as democratic theory would lead us to believe, but of economic control over the political system (Walker, 1966). Hispanics' lack of

economic power might suggest that they have little influence over media coverage and the media are largely unconcerned about Hispanics' problems. However, Hispanics are not a homogenous group (Soruco, 1986). While Puerto Ricans and especially Mexicans are generally politically disenfranchised and exercise little economic and political power, pockets of Cuban populations in South Florida, New York and New Jersey exercise substantial power (Garrison, 1987; Rieff, 1987; Rosensteil, 1987; Rothchild, 1984; Subervi-Velez, in print; Valle, 1988; Volsky, 1988; Yanez, 1986).

In one of the few studies to analyze Spanish-language news media coverage of a political campaign, Subervi-Velez (forthcoming) examined how six Spanish-language daily newspapers in four metropolitan areas (New York, Miami, Los Angeles and Chicago) reported the 1984 presidential election. Though they did not examine whether the newspapers provided Hispanic angles to the news, they found the papers voiced clear editorial opinions. Unlike their English-language counterparts, the newspapers tended to be highly partisan, similar to the partisan press in most South and Central American societies (Alisky, 1981; 1983; Salwen, 1987). The conservative newspapers, especially Miami's Diaro Las Americas, reported the Republican campaign more thoroughly than the Democratic campaign. The liberal La Opinion of Los Angeles reported the Democratic campaign more thoroughly than the Republican campaign. While the Subervi-Velez study suggests that Spanish-language newspapers may provide unique Hispanic political orientations that appeal to their readers, there is still a need to know whether they specifically provide Hispanic angles to their campaign coverage.

The research question this paper will address is: To what extent did Miami's Spanish-language newspapers provide Hispanic angles to the 1988 presidential primary?

METHOD

This study is part of an on-going content analysis of news of Hispanics in English-language and Spanish-Language newspapers in five cities during the 1988 election primary season (Miami, San Antonio, Los Angeles, New York, and Chicago). The results here represent the first analyses of some of that data.

To address the research question posed in this paper, we analyzed how Miami's two Spanish-language daily newspapers, El Neuvo Herald and Diaro Las Americas, reported the 1988 presidential primaries from January 1, 1988, a little more than one month prior to the first presidential caucus in Iowa, to August 20, 1988, the first Sunday after the the last presidential convention, the Republican National Convention in New Orleans. Researchers have paid less attention to the role of mass media during political primaries than general elections. In addition, the primary period offers a variety of candidates and issues (Anon., 1988a; Lichter, 1988; Lichter & Lichter, 1988; Williams & Semlak, 1978; Yum & Kendall, 1988).

El Nuevo Herald, which has a circulation of about 90,000 on weekdays and 92,000 on Sunday, is a Spanish-language edition of the Miami Herald, a Knight-Ridder publication. It is the largest circulation Spanish-language newspaper in the continental United States. The paper was established in 1976 to deal with the Miami Herald's "Hispanic panic" problem. Diaro Las Americas is a family-owned newspaper established in 1953 and is still published by

Horacio Aguirre, a Nicaraguan native. It is published everyday but Saturday and has a circulation of about 66,000.

The findings from the two Miami newspapers were compared to the presidential primary coverage of La Opinion, of Los Angeles, the nation's oldest and best established Spanish-language daily. With a circulation exceeding 70,000, La Opinion is a family owned newspaper founded in 1926 by Ignacio Lozano Sr., a Mexican native, who hoped that his paper would be the voice of the Mexican people in the United States. Like Miami, Los Angelas has a politically active Hispanic population. But unlike Miami, Los Angeles' Hispanic population tends to be politically liberal, and that is reflected in the pages and columns of La Opinion (Subervi-Velez, forthcoming).

Miami's Spanish-language newspapers probably differ from other Spanish-language newspapers in the United States. Miami's Hispanics, largely of Cuban heritage, are more politically conservative than most of the nation's Hispanics. In addition, Miami's Hispanics exercise greater economic power in Miami than most of the nation's Hispanics exercise in their various communities. They tend to be far more likely to vote than whites and other non-Hispanics in Dade County (Anon., 1988a). For this reason, generalizations beyond Miami's Spanish-language newspapers should be made with caution. Nevertheless, if Miami's Spanish-language newspapers, serving a Hispanic audience with relatively more economic and political power than most Hispanics in the United States, do not provide Hispanic angles to presidential primary campaign news, then it is unlikely that most other Spanish-language newspapers in other cities will provide such news.

All stories, excluding advertising content, editorials and letters to the editor, that dealt with the presidential primaries were examined. These included photographs with cutlines. Each story was coded for the candidate or candidates, if any; and whether a Hispanic angle was addressed. A story was coded as having a Hispanic angle if it made any reference to Hispanic concerns whatsoever. This was a very liberal definition of Hispanic angles because it included even stories with a passing mention of Hispanic angles. Finally, all stories were coded by topic. The topics were as follows:

A) Horserace: Stories having anything to do with candidates' electability (i.e., his place vis a vis the others in the race, results indicated by polls, opinions about who won or lost.

B) General Candidate/Party Platform: Candidate or party stands on public issues and matters of foreign policy (e.g., economic issues, social issues, crime, defense, arms talks and treaties, international relations, and so forth.

C) General Campaign Activities: Daily activities and events of party or candidates (e.g., speaking at rallies, universities, and so forth; public appearances and someone speaking in place of or in favor of the candidate, including staff, media personality, community leaders, and so forth).

D) Personality Profile: Information regarding a candidate's beliefs, actions, statements, and so forth, to mean something positive/negative about the candidate's ability to lead; candidate's physical or mental health; family or business.

E) Primary Results: Statistical and other results of the primaries. Does not include opinions about who won or lost, just the results.

F) Other political news not related to a specific candidate.

G) Combination of any of the above factors.

FINDINGS

A total of 151 stories were reported in Diaro Las Americas, 205 in El Nuevo Herald, and 254 in La Opinion. As can be seen from Table 1, which presents Hispanic and non-Hispanic stories by topic, all three newspapers devoted approximately the same proportion of stories to news with Hispanic angles (Diaro Las Americas, 26.5%; El Nuevo Herald, 31.7%; and La Opinion, 26.8%).

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TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE

There were some differences among the papers regarding when Hispanic angles were reported by topic. El Nuevo Herald devoted a larger proportion of Hispanic-oriented stories dealing with general campaign activities (44.7%) than Diaro Las Americas (25%) and La Opinion (29.3%). Also, in sheer numbers, the two Miami newspapers tended to report far fewer stories dealing with primary results (Diaro, n = 3; El Nuevo Herald, n = 6) than La Opinion (n = 23). For the most part, these primary results stories were treated as non-Hispanic stories. Only Diaro reported one of these stories with a Hispanic angle.

Diaro Las Americas reported more personality profiles than the other papers (31.1%, compared to 16.1% in La Opinion and 14.1% in El Nuevo Herald). This tendency of Diaro Las Americas to be more likely than the other papers to focus on personality stories about the candidates and report few primary results stories suggests Spanish-language newspapers may differ among themselves in terms of hard news and soft news about the campaign.

The results from all three newspapers suggests that when the topic of the general candidate or party platform on issues is addressed, then it is most likely that Hispanic angles will be addressed. In Diaro Las Americas, 43.8% of the general candidate/party platform stories addressed Hispanic angles (La Opinion, 40%; El Nuevo Herald, 35.5%).

In El Nuevo Herald, 44.7% of the stories dealing with general campaign activities addressed Hispanic angles. That large proportion of Hispanic stories dealing with general campaign activities did not hold for the other papers (La Opinion, 29.3%; Diaro Las Americas, 25%).

Table 2 presents the results of the coverage of three leading candidates during the primary campaign period by Hispanic and Non-Hispanic issues. In addition to George Bush and Michael S. Dukakis, who were nominated by their parties, Democratic contender Jesse Jackson was a serious contender. His unique populist style and his stated interest in the rights of minorities made him a major candidate. The results in Table 2 only pertain to stories dealing individually with these candidates. Stories dealing with other candidates and those that dealt with more than one candidate are not included.

TABLE 2 ABOUT HERE

George Bush received more coverage than Dukakis or Jackson in all three newspapers. This was more likely to be the case in the Miami newspapers, where Bush received 46.5% of the coverage compared to Dukakis' 27.4% of the coverage in El Nuevo Herald and 50.8% of the coverage compared to 38.1% of the coverage for Dukakis in Diaro Las Americas. The difference between Bush's and Dukakis's coverage in the liberal La Opinion was less extreme: 38.9% compared to 32.8%.

Jackson received the least coverage among the three candidates in all three newspapers. Coverage of Jackson ranged from 11.1% of the stories devoted exclusively to Bush, Dukakis or Jackson in the conservative Diaro Las Americas to 26% in El Nuevo Herald and 28.2% in the liberal La Opinion.

There was also a difference in the Hispanic/non-Hispanic portrayal of Jackson in Diaro Las Americas. Almost three-quarters of the stories devoted exclusively to Jackson in Diaro Las Americas dealt with Hispanic issues. Most commonly Jackson's past ties to Cuba and Fidel Castro were mentioned, a touchy issue among Miami's Cuban community. A caveat must be made, however, that this finding should not be overemphasized because it only dealt with seven stories.

There were more Hispanic stories about Dukakis than Bush in all three newspapers, but in all the newspapers the majority of Dukakis stories were non-Hispanic stories. In the case of the two Miami newspapers the difference in the Hispanic coverage between Bush and Dukakis was slight, about 5%. But in the liberal La Opinion there were more Hispanic stories about Dukakis than Hispanic stories about Bush. There were numerous reasons for this difference, including Dukakis' Central America policy and his ability to speak Spanish.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper addresses whether Spanish-language newspapers serving a community with a large Hispanic population address issues of Hispanic concerns during a presidential primary campaign; and if so, in what context (i.e., topics, candidates) are they presented. Miami's Spanish-language newspapers were compared to La Opinion, of Los Angeles, which is widely regarded to be among the best Spanish-

language newspapers in the United States. Past research has also shown that Spanish-language newspapers may subscribe to a more partisan political tradition than the English-language press. Miami has a politically conservative Hispanic community, and its newspapers -- especially Diaro Las Americas -- tend to reflect those views. Los Angeles has a politically liberal Hispanic community, and La Opinion has tended to reflect those politically liberal views.

An obvious weakness of this paper is that no comparisons were made to Miami's English-language newspapers. Such data are now being gathered and comparisons will be made. Nevertheless, in absolute terms, more than a quarter of the presidential primary coverage in each of the newspapers had a Hispanic angle. In the case of El Nuevo Herald, which is printed by the English-language Miami Herald to specifically deal with complaints about an alleged lack of concern about the Hispanic community, nearly one-third of the stories contained a Hispanic angle. The papers, therefore, cannot be justifiably accused of overlooking Hispanic concerns.

Regarding topics, there seemed to be a slight tendency for stories dealing generally with the candidate or party platform and those dealing with general political news to address Hispanic concerns than other stories.

But stories regarding the three major candidates to emerge from the presidential parties -- Bush, Dukakis, and Jackson -- tended to suggest differences in coverage, both by candidates and political orientations of cities and newspapers. The conservative Miami newspapers tended to report proportionately more Bush stories than the liberal La Opinion. And at least the conservative Diaro Las

Americas carried fewer Jackson stories than El Nuevo Herald and La Opinion. The liberal La Opinion was more likely to report Dukakis stories with Hispanic angles than the two Miami newspapers. Thus, there is some evidence to suggest that the coverage followed the partisan policies of the newspapers.

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Table 1

STORY TOPICS AND HISPANIC AND NON-HISPANIC ISSUES

	El Nuevo Herald			Diario Las Americas		
	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic	n	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic	n
a*.	18.6%	81.4%	59	16.1%	83.9%	31
b.	35.5	64.5	31	43.8	56.3	32
c.	44.7	55.3	47	25.0	75.0	24
d.	20.7	79.3	29	23.4	76.6	47
e.	0.0	100.0	6	33.3	66.7	3
f.	48.3	51.7	29	25.0	75.0	8
g.	50.0	50.0	4	16.7	83.3	6
	N= 65	N=140	N=205	N= 40	N=111	N=151
	Chi-sq = 17.21	df = 6	p < .01	Chi-sq = 7.24	df = 6	p < NS

* See next page for topic codes

Table 1 Continued

La Opinion

	Hispanic	Non-Hispanic	n
a.	10.0%	90.0%	40
b.	40.0	60.0	50
c.	29.3	70.7	82
d.	17.1	82.9	41
e.	0.0	100.0	23
f.	70.6	29.4	17
g.	0.0	100.0	1
	N= 68	N=186	N=254

Chi-sq = 40.22 df = 6 p < .001

Topic Codes

a = Horserace

b = General candidate/party platform

c = General Campaign activities

d = Personality Profile

e = Primary results

f = Other political news

g = Combination

Table 2

CANDIDATE COVERAGE AND HISPANIC AND NON-HISPANIC ISSUES

	El Nuevo Herald		n	Diaro Las Americas		n
	Non-His	Hispanic		Non-His	Hispanic	
Dukakis	70.0%	30.0%	20	79.2%	20.8%	24
Bush	73.5	26.4	34	84.4	15.6	32
Jackson	78.9	21.1	19	28.6	71.4	7
			N= 73			N = 63
Chi-sq = .41 df=2 p= NS				Chi-sq = 9.40 df=2 p < .01		

	La Opinion		
	Non-His	Hispanic	n
Dukakis	58.1%	41.8%	43
Bush	76.5	23.5	51
Jackson	75.7	24.3	37
			N=131

chi-sq = 4.48 df=2 p= NS